(e) by when, the process of selection of distributorship would be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) to (e) After reconstitution of the Dealer Selection Board (BSB) and readvertisement of the location, selection for the LPG distributorship at Bhikiyasain, district Almora has since been completed by the DSB concerned.

Demand and Supply of Oil and Gas

111. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any effort is being made by Government to bridge the widening gap between demand and supply of oil and natural gas in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the achievement made in the regard during the Ninth Five Year Plan, year-wise so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Several important steps have been taken to Increase oil and gas production, which include the following:

(i) to improve the recovery factor from existing major fields by implementing Enhanced Oil Recovery (EORy Improved Oil Recovery (IOR) schemes; in particular Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) has taken up 15 fields for this purpose at an estimated investment of Rs. 10,000 crores, which would also help in accelerating oil production from these fields.

(ii) to increase exploration efforts through the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP). Under the first round

of NEU\ Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) have been signed for 24 blocks in which works are in progress. Additionally, under the second round of NELP, PSCs have been signed on 17.7.2001 for 23 blacks.

(iii) to attract technology and investment, PSCs for 9 discovered fields, 8 in Gujarat and 1 in Assam, were signed on 23.2.2001 with consortia of India and foreign companies.

(iv) to explore in new areas, especially in deep water and difficult frontier areas, as also explore in the deeper layers of the producing fields.

(v) to develop faster the newly discovered fields and to step up the use of new technologies for seismic surveys, work *Ova,* stimulation operations, drilling of wells etc. in producing areas.

(vi) Successful conclusion *of* first bidding round fo/ exploration; and exploitation of Coal Bed Methane.

(vii) Approvals for setting up of LNG import facilities in the country.

(viii) Bilateral initiatives for development of transnational gas pipeline projects from West (Iran) and South/South-East (Bangladesh).

Steps have also been taken to increase refming capacity by expansion of existing refineries in public sector and setting up of refineries in joint and private sectors.

(c) The achievements made in the Ninth plan period are as under:

Year	Indi-genous oil production (MMT)	Crude oil processing (MMT)	Installed Refining capacity* (MMT)	Import of petroleum products (MMT)	Gas Sales (In MMS-CMD)
1997-98	33.85	65.2	62.2	23.0	54.93
1998-99	32.70	68.5	62.2	23.8	57.63
1999-2000	31.93	85.7	69.1	16.6	59.95
2000-01	32.43	103.1	11^0	9.3	61.75
2001-02 (estimated)	32.50	108.2	112.5	5.0	62.07

* at the begining of the year.
MMT : Million Metric Tonnes
MMSCMD : Million Standard Cubic Meters Per Day.

New Explorations

† 112. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have taken any decision to increase the production target and go for new explorations during the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, whether Government have taken any action in this direction so far; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.